

Brussels, 22 April 2004

President Prodi and Mr Wim Kok announce the establishment of the High-level Group on the Lisbon Strategy

President Prodi and Mr Wim Kok announce the establishment of the High-level Group on the mid-term review of the Lisbon strategy in 2005. The decision to set up this Group was taken by the European Council last March. Its remit is to make proposals to the Commission to give renewed stimulus to the Lisbon strategy and to improve actual delivery. The Group will be chaired by Mr Wim Kok, former Prime Minister of the Netherlands and will be made up of leading figures representing the different stakeholders (trade unions, business, political authorities, academics). It will report to the Commission by 1 November next.

In accordance with the conclusions of the March European Council, the European Commission has just set up a High-level Group on the Lisbon Strategy, to be chaired by Mr Wim Kok, former Prime Minister of the Netherlands.

This Group is to look into ways of injecting fresh stimulus into the Lisbon strategy, in particular by improving delivery of the objectives set and by involving Member States and stakeholders more closely. It will also be assessing the instruments and methods used so far.

The High-level Group will report to the Commission by 1 November next. The report will help the Commission in preparing proposals for the mid-term review of the Lisbon strategy to be included in its spring report to the European Council in March 2005.

The Group will be made up of thirteen independent figures representing the different stakeholders.

Mr Wim Kok, Chairman,

Mr Romain Bausch,

Mr Niall Fitzgerald,

Mr Antonio Gutiérrez,

Mr Will Hutton,

Ms Ane-Marie Idrac,

Ms Wanja Lundby-Wedin,

Mr Thomas Mirow,

Mr Bedrich Moldan,

Mr Luigi Paganetto,
Mr Dariusz Rosati,
Mr Veli Sundbäck,
Mr Friedrich Verzetnitsch

The Lisbon strategy, as set out by the March 2000 European Council, is designed to make the European Union into the world's most dynamic and competitive economy by 2010, capable of strong growth, with more and better jobs and a sustainable environment. A number of sectoral targets were set in order to achieve this ambitious objective. But both the Commission, in its spring 2004 report, and the European Council, in its conclusions, note that delivery of these objectives is inadequate. This delay will ultimately harm European growth and employment. The mid-term review planned for 2005 should provide an opportunity for strengthening the process and actual delivery.

Further information will be available shortly on the Lisbon strategy website

http://europa.eu.int/comm/lisbon_strategy/index_en.html

Presentation of the members of the High-level Group on the Lisbon Strategy

- Mr Willem Kok (Chairman), former Prime Minister of the Netherlands, Chairman of the Task Force for Employment in Europe.
- Mr Romain Bausch, President and CEO SES Global, Luxemburg.
- Mr Niall Fitzgerald, Chairman of Unilever, co-Chairman of the Transatlantic Business Dialogue.
- Mr Antonio Gutiérrez, Socialist member of the Spanish Congress, former Secretary-General of the CCOO trade union.
- Mr Will Hutton, Chief Executive of the Work Foundation, Governor of the London School of Economics, author, leader writer.
- Ms Anne-Marie Idrac, Chairwoman of the RATP (Paris public transport system), Chairwoman of the European Movement-France, former Minister of Transport.
- Ms Wanja Lundby-Wedin, Chairwoman of the Swedish Trade Union Confédération.
- Mr Thomas Mirow, Hamburg City Councillor, responsible for economic affairs, former management consultant.
- Mr Bedrich Moldan, Chairman of the Environment Centre at the Charles University in Prague, former Czech Minister of the Environment.
- Mr Luigi Paganetto, Professor of economics at the University of Rome.
- Mr Dariusz Rosati, Professor of economics at the Central School of Commerce, former Minister of Foreign Affairs.
- Mr Veli Sundbäck, Vice-President of Nokia-Finland, Member of the Bureau of the United Nations Information and Communication Technologies Task Force.
- Mr Friedrich Verzetnitsch, Chairman of the ÖGB trade union.